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Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."
JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

Some months ago it was pointed out in these columns that numerous strikes have been known in the public service of Great Britain, both civil and military, contrary to the theory of State Socialism that governmental control of industry would settle the strike question. This theory has just received another blow in the strike of twelve hundred Buda-Pesth postmen for higher wages.

At a recent meeting of the building trade section of the New York Central Labor Union, James McGill, delegate of the Operative Plasterers' Union, gave notice of a proposed amendment to the constitution of the Central Labor Union committing that body to advocacy of free banking as a logical application of the principle of free trade. This is an encouraging sign, though the proposed amendment will hardly be adopted.

It is quite safe to say that the boycott will never again be denounced as a hideous foreignism scarcely less heinous than bomb-throwing. The virtuous and pious Presbyterian General Assembly, in its determination to put down heresy, did not shrink from resorting to the boycott of Briggs and the Union Theological Seminary, whose graduates are apt to be infected with rationalism; and, while a number of religious papers have "deprecated" this "extreme step" and "manifestation of bigotry," none have ventured to denounce it in the familiar style of anti-labor fulmination.

Those who are agitating the question of jury reform are wasting their energies. Soon the system of trial by jury will be "reformed altogether." Omnibus injunctions are the modern substitute for the slow, expensive, and uncertain trial by jury, and the plutocratic governments are gradually abolishing the institution which was intended to operate as a check on their encroachments. First the right to judge of the law was withdrawn from juries and given to judges, and now the right to judge of the facts is to be restricted to the narrowest possible limits, — at least at the first stage of the game. Of course, after an alleged offender has been imprisoned by order of the court, without indictment and verdict by jury, the plutocrats are entirely willing to have him tried on the same charges by a jury. It is a fine trick, this injunction business.

A letter from a Cincinnati comrade contains the following passage: "Louis F. Post gave a lecture here on May 26. After he got through, I congratulated him on his progress toward Anarchy, because of his having very strongly advocated free competition and individual liberty. He also stated very plainly and clearly that occupancy and use was really the only true title to land. His attention being called to this statement after the lecture, he said that he advocated the Single Tax as the best method of getting to, or reaching, the occupancy-and-use title to the land. He spoke for an hour and a half, and failed to say anything about natural monopolies, — strange to say, as this used to be a great hobby with Single Taxers." If my correspondent did not misunderstand Mr. Post, this is one of the most significant facts that have lately been brought to my notice. I print it here that its correctness may be challenged, if any one feels authorized to do so. The Single Tax theory as expounded by Mr. George, Mr. Byington, the Philadelphia "Justice," and, so far as I know, its prominent champions generally, is a distinct denial of the theory that land belongs to the occupant and user and an affirmation that each and every piece of land belongs equally to all people. After Mr. George, Mr. Post is perhaps the most conspicuous man in the Single Tax movement, and, if he has taken a position which involves the rejection of the Single Tax theory and pledges him to the Single Tax only as a measure of expediency and as a stepping-stone, the fact, I repeat, is one of no ordinary importance.

As a rule, free-traders favor a system of direct taxation. They believe, and rightly, that government could do far less mischief if the taxpayers had to settle its bills, pay for its follies, and receive daily object-lessons enforcing the connection between regulation and plunder. Nowhere would familiarity breed more contempt than in this case, for it is the ignorance of the *modus vivendi* of government which accounts in great measure for the superstitious belief of the average man in its power and wisdom. Naturally, therefore, the direct-taxationists ought to deplore a decision of the supreme court which entirely takes away the power of the federal government to levy direct taxes in any fair and practicable manner. Yet what do we find? That some of the most strenuous opponents of indirect taxation, who have for years fought the tariff with bitterness and vigor, are actually rejoicing over the income-tax decision! As a matter of fact, that decision has knocked all the stuffing out of the "tariff reform" issue, for the government has no other means of revenue now than indirect taxes on consumption; and, if the free-traders were sincere, they would be among the first to demand a constitutional amendment empowering congress to impose direct taxes without regard to the population of the several States. But the newspaper free-traders are not sincere; their devotion to free trade was platonic and harmless, while their fidelity to the interests of plutocracy is deep and real. When the two clashed, the glittering generalities about free trade vanished into thin air. The poor consumer was forgotten; the natural laws of trade were lost sight of; all that was remembered was the necessity of relieving the plutocrats from a direct tax which, theory or no theory, they refused to pay.

Judge Barrett, of this city, who is deeply impressed with the necessity of jury reform, has elaborated a plan which the next legislature will be asked to substitute for the present practice. It is simply an adaptation of the "struck jury" system to criminal cases generally. An official of high character is to select twenty-five hundred names from a list of double that number, such list to contain none but leading citizens, whose intelligence and character are well known to the community at large. More specifically, we are told that only bankers, great merchants, and men of affairs are to be selected, the assumption being that a trial by such men must lead to just results. In many cases, where class bias did not enter, this would doubtless be true; but imagine a jury of bankers, landlords, and merchants trying Coxey on a trumped-up charge, or Debs, or Most, or any other agitator! Would such a jury be inclined to deal fairly with a striker, boycotter, walking delegate, vagrant, Communist, or any other "enemy of society"? Such a jury would, of course, represent only a class, and not the country as a whole, and would revolutionize the genuine, ancient conception of a trial by the country. The masses would be excluded altogether, and jury service would become the privilege of the few. It is passing strange that professed believers in universal suffrage should propose to exclude the bulk of the population from jury service. How is it possible that those who are fit to make laws and dictate policies, to decide abstract and complex questions in finance, trade, and taxation, should be incompetent to decide whether a man has or has not done something deserving of punishment? The truth is that jury service is of much higher importance than the right of suffrage; but our newspaper wiseacres and reformers are not aware of *that*, and, from their point of view, to adopt universal suffrage and restrict jury service to the few is to strain at a gnat after swallowing a camel.

Liberty.

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"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the exciseman, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel." — PROUDHON.

☞ The appearance in the editorial column of articles over other signatures than the editor's initial indicates that the editor approves their central purpose and general tenor, though he does not hold himself responsible for every phrase or word. But the appearance in other parts of the paper of articles by the same or other writers by no means indicates that he disapproves them in any respect, such disposition of them being governed largely by motives of convenience.

Disowned by His Teacher.

Toward the close of Mr. Arthur Kitson's preface to his new book on money occurs the following passage:

I desire to acknowledge my deep indebtedness to my friend, Mr. William A. Whittick, of Philadelphia, for the many suggestions and valuable aid he has given me in the preparation of this book. I may say that, in an indirect way, Mr. Whittick is largely responsible for its appearance. It was from numerous discussions and considerable correspondence with him that I was induced to undertake the task. Further, it was originally through reading Mr. Whittick's pamphlet on the "Money Question" that I first saw the natural and inevitable conflict between money and specie.

The important part which, by Mr. Kitson's own acknowledgment, Mr. Whittick played in the production of his book has been more than hinted at by Mr. Whittick in sundry letters written to me since its publication, in some of which, moreover, he expressed great eagerness for the appearance of Liberty's review of the work. The opinion generally prevails, and evidently has some foundation, that the book is, in a degree, the fruit of the collaboration of these two gentlemen. These facts add much to the interest of the following letter, written by Mr. Whittick since the last number of Liberty appeared.

To the Editor of Liberty:

My relations with Mr. Kitson during the time in which he was writing his book ("A Scientific Solution of the Money Question") were continuously intimate; more so, in fact, than his reference to me in his preface would indicate.

We were never quite harmonious as to the conception of economic value, but my article on the money question in "Bombs" convicts me of error in the same line as Mr. Kitson, — namely, the confounding of the *expression* of value with *value* itself.

Once accepting the Jevons definition of value, — *viz.*, that value is a ratio, — we were bound to arrive at the logical conclusion that *nothing has value*, and that a standard of value (ratio) or a measure of value (ratio) was an absurdity.

We were thus (as Mr. Bilgram says of Mr. Kitson) led to the conflict between "adopted erroneous notions" and "native common sense."

This struck me very forcibly when I carefully read Mr. Kitson's book, and led me to retrace my steps to my original position, — *viz.*, that value is an attribute of wealth, originating in desire, and that, therefore, we may talk of things *having value*, which value is always *expressed in ratios*.

But, while a thing may have value, *value is not a thing*. It is purely an abstraction, appearing and disappearing with the freaks of the mind.

Any standard or measure of value must be homogeneous with the conception or thing gauged or measured. Hence the measure or standard of abstract value must be an abstraction.

For instance, the present so-called standard of value, 25.8 grains of gold, being a concrete substance, cannot be a standard of the abstract.

But *the value* of 25.8 grains of gold at a given time may be a standard of value. I say "at a given time," because the first change in the value of gold separates the concrete gold from the abstract value.

The attempt to use a commodity standard has led economists and the world generally to conclude that an invariable unit and standard of value is impossible, — yea, inconceivable.

But, while a *material* invariable standard is impossible, an ideal standard is easily possible.

Suppose that we were now devising a money system based upon an invariable unit of value.

At a certain moment of time we may imagine a line passing through all commodities (or *one*, it matters not how many or how few) which we will call the dollar line, using the term dollar arbitrarily because we are accustomed to it. This line indicates the purchasing power of a dollar at a given time. *The dollar* thus becomes a fixed *priceometer*, never changing *its* position, but registering with absolute correctness the fluctuations (above or below its line) of commodity values.

Thus, if at the given moment *the value* of 25.8 grains of gold is *one dollar*, and that value should change the next moment after the adoption of the standard to one dollar and twenty-five cents, the invariable dollar unit would indicate the change immediately.

The dollar, not being a commodity, but being endowed with *value* (exchange or purchasing power), is not subject to the conditions which govern the values of commodities, and therefore its value must remain *constant* and *invariable*.

Thus we reach a scientific basis for a money system; an abstract unit of abstract values; value, the unit of values; value, the standard and measure of value.

I claim to have discovered this *invariable unit* for the first time in the history of economics.

I hope that Messrs. Tucker, Bilgram, and Kitson will now each confess his sins, as I have mine, and join me in the propaganda of the gospel of industrial salvation. WM. A. WHITTICK.

886 N. 25TH STREET, PHILADELPHIA, JUNE 16, 1895.

P. S. — Mr. Kitson's reply to Mr. Tucker's and Mr. Bilgram's criticisms certainly posits a *material* unit of *value* or (as he calls it) of *purchasing power*, and flatly contradicts all his reasoning. His definition of value also leads him to hunt for some expression to use instead of *value*, such as purchasing power, worth, potency, all of which mars his work very materially.

This leaves Mr. Kitson in an unfortunate plight. In his endeavor to defend himself against the attack of Liberty, he has taken a position from which even his collaborator hastens to flee. He is now an almost deserted man.

But how much better off is his collaborator? I do not know when Mr. Whittick first "carefully read" the book on which Mr. Kitson and he collaborated, but certain it is that during the months which elapsed between its publication and that of Liberty's review he betrayed to me no doubt of any of the positions taken in its pages. I half suspect that it was Liberty's criticisms that inspired the "careful reading," and that after it Mr. Whittick found himself in a hole out of which he has made all possible haste to clamber. But in so doing has he found any footing upon solid ground for himself and his no-standard theory? Not the slightest that I can perceive. To be sure, he tells us in the most positive manner that his invariable unit chosen on the initial day will promptly register all variations in values that may occur on subsequent days. As Mr. Whittick is a man of undoubted veracity, it is highly reassuring to have his word for this; but a little information as to the how and the why would be still more satisfactory.

In short, the most significant thing about Mr. Whittick's letter is the exceedingly careful manner in which he avoids the problem that has been the death of Mr. Kitson. *I challenge him to solve it.* The terms of my problem give him all the data that he would have in actual commerce. If his unit will indicate value variations as he says it will, let him show me how much silver, how much gold, and how much copper this unit will represent on April 20, 1896, figuring from the data furnished. If he can show an equivalence of his unit to any definite amount of these commodities without permanently relating the unit to some commodity standard, he will at once secure a convert to his position in my person. Until he shall do this, neither he or his theory can have the slightest standing in the economic arena. There is this to be said for Mr. Kitson, — that he tackled my problem bravely. Will Mr. Whittick be as courageous — and as rash? We shall see. T.

Larry Caught in a Lie.

The announcement of the revolutionary decision in the Debs case elicited much noisy commendation in the press. Only a few of the quieter and more self-respecting newspapers demurred to the new doctrines promulgated by the court and expressed some apprehension with regard to the liability of gross abuse of power on the part of the federal courts; the overwhelming majority of the plutocratic press welcomed the decision with shouts of joy. Lest, however, the enthusiasm should appear suspicious, they took care to protest that in reality there was nothing novel or surprising in the view taken by the court. It is traditional doctrine, they told us, — merely a reaffirmation of ancient truths that a few wretched demagogues tried to obscure, and nothing else or less should have been anticipated.

Now that many of the poor fools and all-around ignoramuses who constitute the bulk of American editorialdom believed, or believed that they believed, at least at the time when they wrote, that such was actually the case, is beyond doubt. But there is conclusive evidence on record showing that some of the most blatant eulogists of the court and violent assailants of Debs knew better and deliberately lied when they professed to find nothing in the decision except orthodox, well-established, time-honored, and necessary truths. These hypocritically and dishonestly suppressed their real opinions, and pretended to endorse that which they clearly saw was mischievous in the last degree. Take that aggressive plutocratic expositor, the Godkinian "Evening Post." Its approval of the Debs decision was so unqualified and warm that the innocent reader is ready to swear that it never could have entertained any different view of the matter. But those with memories not so conveniently short can cover the brazen "Post" with shame and confusion by referring to its own editorial columns

of an earlier date and quoting the statements which it made at a time when there was a probability of a decision favorable to Debs. Its files will show that last year, when the judges issued injunction after injunction to overawe the strikers and crush the Debs campaign, it ridiculed the "droll use" of the equitable remedy of the injunction, and facetiously suggested that murder, arson, and burglary might likewise be proceeded against by omnibus injunctions. When the appeal from the Woods decision reached the supreme court, the "Post" reviewed the whole controversy and expressed itself as follows:

There is no doubt that the injunction served a very useful purpose at the time. It became, in fact, a kind of substitute for martial law. Local government at the West had utterly broken down. The governor and sheriffs were afraid or unwilling to protect property and arrest rioters. What was to be done in such cases nobody knew, until the president intervened. So that the judges really did the community a good turn in converting contempt of court into a special constable. But it would discredit us all greatly if such practices were allowed to continue. . . . We ought at this time of the day to be able to make the criminal law equal to all emergencies. For all that the Debs rioters did or tried to do, they were liable to indictment, trial, and sentence in the United States courts. And they are just the class of men on whom the effect of departure from the regular course of law is bad. They ought not to feel that they can drive society into unusual and abnormal courses for its protection against violence. The courts which try them should be courts organized for this very purpose. The processes by which they are tried and brought to justice should be the processes by which all crime is punished, and not crimes against railroads simply. There should be no interest surrounded in their eyes by special safeguards. They should always feel, when they begin rioting in railroad stations, that they are attacking, not a particular corporation or trade, but society itself.

By way of strengthening his position, the editor quoted some strong passages from a monograph written by a well-known legal writer in criticism of the "anomalies of the new system of criminal administration," as the "Post" expressed it. The passages are as follows:

We have seen courts of equity invoked in a private lawsuit between individuals or corporations to restrain, not alone the other party to the suit, but all the world, with or without actual notice of a court order or injunction, not only from interference with property which is the subject of the suit, but from committing, or conspiring to commit, or aiding or advising others to commit, acts which are criminal acts, criminal at common law, or made so by recent acts of congress, known as the anti-trust law, or the Inter-State commerce law. We have seen more. We have seen persons committing, or about to commit, such acts, arrested by the civil courts, deprived of their liberty, and punished by imprisonment, and this, as in the Debs case and others, after the emergency which made the excuse for this protective jurisdiction has long gone by. And we have seen them so punished without the usual safeguards of liberty afforded by the criminal law, without indictment, without the right to counsel, without being confronted with witnesses, without trial by jury, and sentenced at the discretion of the judge. We have seen more. We have seen courts, not content with ordering all the world what not to do, order at a word ten or twenty thousand employees of a railroad system to carry out, each and every, the definite or indefinite duties of their employment, as directed by their superior officers, or by the receiver of the court itself, so that for any failure or omission or merely negative act on their part, they may be summarily brought into court and punished then and there, as the court may find leisure to sentence or its attorneys to file complaints.

All this was written in March of this year. But now, when the court sanctions these "anomalies" and discreditable practices; when it definitely establishes this "new system" of criminal administration, which is really only a revival of middle-ages practice, — the "Post," presuming on the forgetfulness and negligence of some and the knavery of others, loudly applauds the rulings, without troubling itself in the least about its emphatic protest of a few months before. If this is not a glaring instance of dishonesty, what is it? The champion of plutocratic morality stands exposed and discredited.

The Boston "Journal," another austere moralist and pillar of Christian faith, is guilty of the same offence as the "Post," though not in the same degree. In March it published a tolerably fair editorial, summarizing the arguments for and against the omnibus-injunction plan of governments, and wound up as follows:

Whatever the decision of the supreme court may be, it can scarcely be regarded with unalloyed satisfaction. If the action of the lower court is sustained, Debs and his associates, instead of being punished after trial by a jury for crimes which they committed, will be punished for contempt of court at the order of a judge, under conditions which many even among conservative men must regard as menacing to individual liberty. On the other hand, if the decision is favorable to the petitioners, it will be broadly interpreted as giving a warrant to arbitrary and lawless acts. There is possible mischief either way.

Now, however, it professes to be in absolute accord with the supreme court, and congratulates the country on the happy outcome of the controversy. On what hypothesis other than knavery can this somersault be explained? Loyalty to their plutocratic masters is stronger in these intellectual prostitutes than any attachment to constitutions, traditions, or principles.

So much for the alleged "traditional doctrine" of government by injunction and the abolition of jury trial. On the other point involved in the Debs case, — the right of the federal executive to order troops into any State, without consulting the local authorities, whenever there occurs any violation of federal law, — there is even more general agreement in the plutocratic press. The sophistry of the court in its attempt to show that the government, although one of enumerated powers, possesses absolute sovereignty within the field of these enumerated powers, or, in other words, that the limitations upon it relate to the subjects of jurisdiction, and not to its territorial extent or method of action, is swallowed with an avidity and relish that must appear very perplexing to those readers (alas! they are few) who have not forgotten that, when Cleveland, for the first time in the history of the government, ordered troops into Illinois, in defiance of the governor of the State and the mayor of Chicago, who asserted that there was no need of such measures, the greatest authority on constitutional law, Judge Cooley, thanked God (or the president — I forget which) for the *precedent* Cleveland has so bravely established at the expense of such little bloodshed! Surely Judge Cooley would not thank God for an act clearly justified by "traditional doctrine," and the present distinction drawn by the court is nothing but an afterthought to sanction the "precedent" set by Cleveland.

It may be said that to prove the hypocrisy and ignorance of the plutocratic press is very like the bursting of an open door. In general, this is true; but we seldom meet such specific and striking illustrations of the familiar truth, and it is not unprofitable to stop and bestow on them a word or two. V. Y.

A Sound Criticism.

In the latest issue of "Egoism" — which, by the way, continues to come along occasionally, much to my gratification — "H" very properly takes me to task editorially for my wholesale endorsement, in No. 312 of Liberty, of the position of J. Greevz Fisher regarding the relation of parents to their children, and of outsiders to both. While "H," like myself, endorses Mr. Fisher's assertion of the legal non-responsibility of parents for the support of their children, he criticises me for not specifically disapproving the following passage that occurred in Mr. Fisher's article in "Personal Rights":

If a person, male or female, alleging parentage, beats, enslaves, or defrauds a child, the Individualist has a perfect right to interfere. He can voluntarily associate himself with the child in a mutual defence organization, and may undoubtedly assume acquiescence by the child. No title to guardianship by a claimant parent ought to be admitted when the alleged guardianship is inimical to the minor.

So much of the argument by which "H" sustains his opposition to Mr. Fisher's view as implies that the cruel treatment on the part of the parent is bestowed upon an invasive child is hardly to the purpose, for invasion on the child's part is not included in the hypothesis. Parents may, and sometimes do, treat utterly inoffensive children in a most shocking manner, and the problem may well be simplified by confining the attention to the case of maltreatment of the non-invasive child. Putting aside, then, this irrelevant portion of "H's" argument, I hasten to say that his main contention that parental control of children is too excellent, too useful, too obviously proper a thing to warrant the setting-up of a superior right of the community in the premises, even in the interest of those who suffer from parental abuse of parental liberty, appeals to me as entirely sound.

The material with which the sociologist deals may be divided into two classes, — owners and owned. Now, under this classification the child presents a difficulty; for, while unquestionably belonging in the category of the owned, he differs from all other parts of that category in the fact that there is steadily developing within him the power of self-emancipation, which at a certain point enables him to become an owner instead of remaining a part of the owned. But I am unable to see that this singularity can alter his technical status pending the day of self-emancipation. Till that day he must remain in the category of the owned, and, as a matter of course, till that day he must have an owner. The only question is: Who shall own him, — the parent or the community? We may decide upon one or the other, according to our view of the requirements of a true social life. If we are State Socialists, we shall decide in favor of the community. If we are Anarchists, we shall decide in favor of the parent. But to whichever of these two we award the control of the child, there the control belongs; and thereafter to

attempt to award a superior control to the other is to disregard the principle originally chosen for our guidance.

If parental ownership and control be acknowledged, it is absurd to say that the doctrine of equal liberty gives the community a right to deprive the parent of control and assume ownership of the child itself whenever parental control is exercised cruelly. This absurdity may best be recognized by turning the case about. Suppose the community were to be acknowledged as the rightful owner of all children; and suppose, further, that in the exercise of its control it were to treat a certain child with extreme cruelty (as often happens in State "charitable" institutions). In such a case, would the doctrine of equal liberty give the mother of the abused child the right to take the child out of the hands of the State, which by the hypothesis is its rightful owner, and assume ownership of it herself? Clearly not. Yet displacement of the State by the mother in the latter case would be no more absurd than the displacement of the mother by the State in the former. The opinion which in either case would favor displacement arises from a feeling of sympathy which blinds the person holding it to the meaning of equal liberty. The question whether such sympathy is to be heeded is simply the old question as to when and where it is advisable to deliberately and avowedly violate the rule which in general we find invaluable in the shaping of our social conduct.

The practical solution of this difficulty will probably be found in the fact that ideas are not realized suddenly and completely, but in a tentative and incomplete fashion by people who do not grasp them fully, and who are therefore less reluctant than the consistent philosopher to deviate in deference to a concrete obstacle. Even such partial, but increasing, realization of the doctrine of equal liberty would gradually eliminate the causes that lead parents to behave abnormally, and thus the question would settle itself.

"H," then, is right in saying that I should have taken exception to the sentences above quoted from Mr. Fisher's article, and I thank him for calling attention to my sin of omission. True, he imputes it to me as a sin of commission, and to this I object. It is not true, as "H" thinks, that I "intentionally committed" myself to Mr. Fisher's incidental error; I simply neglected it in emphasizing my agreement with his main position. But even this imputation of "intention" I am bound to take as a compliment, for it amounts to a declaration that carelessness cannot be assumed in the case of a person who is habitually careful in his statements. T.

The Matter Made Worse.

The little lesson in politeness which Mrs. Dietrick, in another column, reads me from the Greek would be more effective in this instance if it had a bearing on my case. But the coat does not fit me, and I cannot put it on. It fits, to use Mrs. Dietrick's own language, only "savages" who "resort to calling names in their inability to reason upon the main point." I am not here described. Savage perhaps I am, but not an unreasoning savage. Let me call to witness one who no more approves my controversial methods than does Mrs. Dietrick. Mr. John Beverley Robinson, in writing to "Solidarity" to remonstrate with a Communist for neglecting my positions, once said: "He [Tucker] is desperately impolite, I know, and I have often told him so; but, after all, the dog has brains." Thus Mr. Robinson bore testimony that, however harsh my words may be, I always accompany them with arguments. Moreover, this policy was definitely announced by me in the early issues of Liberty. To *mere* abuse I object as much as any one; but, on the other hand, once I have proved my opponent's offence, I claim the right and the satisfaction of employing a vocabulary adequate to the expression of my dislike thereof.

Mrs. Dietrick may prefer to deal with people who, though thinking her dishonest, profess to think otherwise; but I tell her squarely that she need look for no such hypocrisy from me. I am far from regarding her as an essentially and mainly dishonest person, but I do consider that she has not been, and is not now, straightforward in this discussion; and nothing shall prevent me from saying so, having given my reasons therefor. Let us inquire, then, whether in her present article she succeeds in invalidating these reasons.

In order to have the matter freshly before us, I will quote at some length from my last article on the subject. In No. 312, speaking of Mrs. Dietrick, I said:

> In her letter in Liberty of April 6 she declared: 'I do not 'persist' in the statement that I did make. On the contrary, I have entirely ceased it." No reasonable person can deny that it is a justifiable inference from these words that Mrs. Dietrick claimed to have ceased this statement for the reason that she no longer held the same opinion. It is true that in strict logic it is quite possible to cease a statement without ceasing to believe it. But the manner and connection in which she used the words just quoted deprive them of any *raison d'être*, unless it be assumed that she intended them to be accepted by the readers of Liberty and by myself as a confession of error. . . . . If Mrs. Dietrick had not desired her readers to believe that she had changed her mind, she would have said: "I have not repeated my statement, but I still adhere to it." Of two things one: either she did not still adhere to it, and in that case it is dishonest to say now that she did; or she did still adhere to it, and in that case it was dishonest to try to deceive the reader into thinking that she did not. For she knew perfectly well that, when she declared in substance: "I formerly said so, but I say so no more," the reader would naturally infer that she thought so no more.

In answer to this Mrs. Dietrick now says that she made the statement that she did not persist in her objectionable charge, not as an indication of change of opinion, but simply to get rid of me and my flings. It would seem to follow that this same motive, which caused her in March, 1895, to declare that she did not persist, determined her, after July, 1894, to cease persisting. Is it not a little extraordinary, then, that, having determined in July, 1894, to treat me thenceforth as a child, she should suddenly, in December, 1894, treat me once more as a grown man by renewing her charge of the previous July, and that in March, 1895, she should have entirely forgotten having done so? Thus it seems to me.

But on this point of motive I have another curious bit of evidence to offer. Mrs. Dietrick's article of March, 1895, containing the statement that she did not persist, was delayed somewhat in this office, and did not appear until April 6 (Liberty, No. 310). Before its appearance, Mrs. Dietrick, wrongly inferring that I did not intend to print it, and having occasion to send me another article on an entirely separate subject, enclosed with the latter a note to me in which she expressed herself as follows: "I presume you are not going to print any of my last communication to you, and that is all right. Do not let us dispute about that point any more. Liberty may say what it pleases about my inconsistency. *I think I am in a process of evolution between two opinions.*" If the sentence which I have here italicized, taken in connection with the sentences preceding it, did not mean that Mrs. Dietrick desired to discontinue the dispute because she had changed, or was changing, her mind, I should very much like to know what it did mean. It certainly inspires in me something more than a suspicion that this is the true explanation of her decision not to persist, and that the new explanation is an afterthought.

Yet, in spite of all, and in view of Mrs. Dietrick's positive assertion in the present number of Liberty, I should perhaps deem it the proper course to give her the benefit of the doubt and withdraw my charge of "dodging and worse," with an apology, were it not for the fact that she now makes another statement the clear falsity of which I shall demonstrate.

Summoned by me to reconcile her December (1894) renewal of her July (1894) statement with her March (1895) declaration that she had entirely ceased to make her July statement, she offers this answer: "The only acknowledgment I have to make in this matter is that in March I overlooked my December article." Note now that this is a virtual admission of my claim that the December statement was in substance a repetition of the July statement, and, bearing this in mind, note further these two facts: (1) that in Liberty of April 6 (No. 310) I specifically quoted to Mrs. Dietrick her December statement, calling her attention to the fact that it was a repetition of the charge made in July; and (2) that in Liberty of May 4 Mrs. Dietrick, replying at length to my article of April 6, declared: "I made it [the statement] in July, 1894, *and have never repeated it*, though eight months have passed by since." The italics are mine. Now I ask this question: Since Mrs. Dietrick recognizes the substantial identity of her July and December statements, and if her sweeping March denial that she had persisted is to be explained on the ground that in March she overlooked the existence of the December statement, why did she, in Liberty of May 4, with her December statement squarely before her eyes (placed there by me for the specific purpose), declare more emphatically than before that she had *never* repeated her July statement?

The case is plain. Whether or not she overlooked in March her statement of December, it is certain that in May she wilfully disregarded it, and this makes the excuse of "overlooking," which she now offers when I insist on an explanation as a condition of further discussion, something worse than a dodge. As a result, I now find myself, in regard, not only to this explanation, but also to the other which I had an inclination to accept, somewhat in the position of the darky whom the preacher tried to impress by narration of the wonders described in

Holy Writ. With gaping mouth Sambo took in the marvels, one after another, even to Jonah and the whale. But, when told of the three gentlemen who passed unharmed through a fiery furnace, his credulity was too severely taxed. "No, sah," he said, "I doan b'lieve dat, sah; and now, come t'ink it over, I doan b'lieve dat ar fish story you tole me either."

T.

Rats!

In addition to the letter from Comrade McCraith, printed in another column, in which my position regarding the attitude of the American Federation of Labor toward the "Arena" is criticised, I have a letter from Comrade Cohen on the same subject, not written originally for publication, but extracts from which I have secured his permission to print, in order to dispose of the matter in a single article. First, however, Mr. Cohen defends his statement that the "Arena" had been boycotted by the Federation, saying:

I was not even formally in error. The delegates from the Typographical Union introduced a resolution asking for a boycott on three Boston publications. The "Arena" was one of them. The resolution was referred to the committee on labels and boycotts, which reported it favorably; this report was unanimously adopted. The boycott was therefore *on* from that minute. In the hope that a settlement might be effected, the boycott was not *pushed*, it being supposed that a magazine like the "Arena" would come to time without such measures being taken because of their large unionist patronage. War can be declared, even if we do not hear the firing. No boycott is ever pushed until it is shown that the boycottee persists in his way; and, whenever such a matter is referred to a committee, such committee always is supposed to make another effort.

Very well. I accept Mr. Cohen's statement as correct. But, as Mr. Flower was disposed to deny the fact of the boycott simply because it had not been put in force, I preferred to admit that he might be technically correct rather than dispute the unimportant point.

Coming then to the main question, Mr. Cohen says:

The act of the "Arena" in buying in the cheapest market is in harmony with free competition, but it is also not only in harmony, but is itself the very act of exploitation. Now, of which of these features does its act partake the most? Clearly the latter. For the one-sided freedom to rob is all it is after. The *extension* of that freedom which is labor's hope it opposes so thoroughly that it lies about it when it makes a step forward and when capitalistic papers tell the truth regarding it.

The "Arena," like all employers, is armed with legal privileges. The Federation is a voluntary association, and is often outlawed. The former is trying to get a few more dollars of "surplus value" into its pockets; the latter tries to get dollars, it is true, but, in getting them, it gets only what belongs to it. The "self-preservation" of the Federation surely cannot be compared to the narrow feelings of Flower. If the Federation is successful, it is an approach to equity. Then why are your sympathies with the "Arena"?

You must not think that I would take this position regarding a paper that could not afford to pay, and was really struggling; the "Arena" boasts of its size and prosperity.

Why is it unbecoming for me to call the "Arena" a "rat"? I *do* pay as "high prices as possible" for all I consume. Trade Unionists mutually pledge each other to buy union goods wherever possible.

As to the "inconsistency" between our attitude toward the "Arena" and our refusal to endorse State Socialism, I take your meaning to be this: State Socialists oppose competition between laborers; in trying to check competition, the Federation does the same. This resemblance is not fundamental. State Socialists oppose competition as a principle; Trade Unionists, not being able to abolish the monopolies immediately, do the *only* thing they can do, — *i. e.*, try to check the competition among themselves. As a matter of fact, Trade Unions are the most thoroughly Anarchistic organizations to be found in our present society.

So far as the criticisms of Comrades Cohen and McCraith are based on the idea that I sympathize with the "Arena" because it has been boycotted, they are entirely out of place. The paragraph which I wrote on the subject specifically recognized the propriety of the Federation's course in boycotting the "Arena" or anybody else in order to maintain the wages of its members at a certain figure. I insisted only that it was equally proper for the "Arena" to boycott the union in order to maintain its profits, or reduce its losses, as the case may be. As long as either the "Arena" or the Federation does nothing more than boycott, my sympathies are about equally divided. I am glad when the Federation printers succeed in getting high wages, and I am also glad when persons who perhaps could not otherwise obtain employment are employed by the "Arena" at wages not so high. It is only when one of these two parties (the Federation and the "Arena"), who are pursuing precisely analogous courses, begins to blackguard the other that I feel like lifting up my voice in behalf of the party thus blackguarded. And I made it plain in my paragraph that my sympathy with the "Arena" was due solely to the bitter words and epithets applied to it because it sees fit to boycott the union. When two men, cast away in a boat, approach the starvation point, and finally grapple in desperation to see which shall kill and eat the other, I pity both alike, until finally one of them, as he raises his arm to deal a death-blow to the other, pharisaically shouts: "Oh! you infamous cannibal." Then my pity becomes partial. It leaves the man who is both a cannibal and a pharisee and goes to the man who is a cannibal only.

"But," answers Mr. Cohen, "the 'Arena' is a pharisee too, — a general, all-round pharisee." Grant it; then blackguard it for its pharisaism, and you will hear no protest from me. But don't blackguard it because it exercises its right to boycott, therein doing just what you are doing yourself. In this special matter, which is the only matter that I am considering, the "Arena" is as good as you are. (Let not Messrs. Cohen and McCraith think that I am calling them pharisees. They will not be pharisees until they shall persist in their course after becoming conscious of its absurdity.)

"But then," again answer both my critics, "the 'Arena,' like all employers, is armed with legal privileges." I deny it point-blank. (The "Arena," it is true, possesses the copyright privilege, but that fact is of no avail as a plea for the printers, for they are partners in the crime. The copyright privilege was recently made much vaster in its power through an infamous bargain with the printers' union, whereby it was agreed that American authors and publishers should be protected against the competition of foreign authors if American printers were at the same time protected against the competition of foreign printers.) On the contrary, the "Arena," like employers in general, and like laborers in general, is a victim of legal privilege. It is paying rent on monopolized land and interest on privileged capital which it would not have to pay if land and money were free; and, if land and money were free, so that it would not have to rent and interest, the natural working of economic law, unaided by any boycott, would force it to pay higher wages to its employees.

"Well," insists Mr. Cohen, as a final defence, "it is all right for me to call the 'Arena' a 'rat,' because I always pay as high prices as possible." Do you indeed, Mr. Cohen? Why, then, are you trying to keep up your wages? Why do you not seek the employer who charges you the greatest amount of your labor for his money? Why do you not become a consistent Altruist at once, and give all that you have to the man that fleeces you? Rats, Cohen, rats! You do not realize the meaning of what you say, my friend, and it is not true. As for the trade unionists who pledge themselves to buy union goods, they may properly denounce any one of their number who violates his pledge; but, unless they follow their principle to the point of paying the highest prices to men not in the union, they cannot consistently denounce as "rats" outsiders who act on the competitive principle.

I have no occasion to answer Mr. McCraith's defence of the Federation for resorting to compulsion through the State, since I have made no attack on the Federation on that ground.

Let us all defend our interests as best we can under the circumstances; but let us also remember that in one way or another we are all "rats" together.

T.

Liberty is glad to find that the Baltimore "American" takes a more intelligent view of the merits of the Maryland jury system than the "Sun" of the same city, which favors a "reform" depriving the jury of the right to judge of the law. Discussing a recent murder case, in which the jury's verdict, by common consent, was just from an abstract point of view and entirely within the evidence, but illogical from a purely legal standpoint, which would have compelled judge and jury, under a different system, to do injustice either to the accused or to the community, the "American" makes these general remarks: "When it was first proposed to confer this power on Maryland juries in criminal cases, the change was regarded with serious misgivings by many able lawyers; but an experience of many years has convinced a large majority of its wisdom. Probably in no State of the Union is more substantial justice meted out in criminal cases, and there have been fewer scandalous miscarriages of justice in this State since this privilege was given to the jury than in the neighboring States. The spectacle is probably never witnessed in Maryland of the browbeating of a jury by a judge because the panel refuses to find in accordance with the letter of the law that a prisoner is guilty, when, in their opinion, he is not actually guilty of the more heinous offence imperatively prescribed by the statute. The juries in this State are often charged in criminal cases with making law to suit particular cases, and the charge is sometimes correct; but it would be difficult to point to any practical injury to the public which has resulted from it."

A Benedict's Repentance.

Sometime I wandered free in heaven's wide bounds;
No one was there to bid me go or stay;
Soothed by an eternal concourse of sweet sounds,
I worshipped angels clad in bright array.
Unfettered Freedom held me captive there;
No tyranny I knew or night or day;
I roamèd ever free as the unlicensed air,
Consoled by nymph demure or debonair.
Ah me! with what despairings do I view
That sweet succession of unplanned delights!
How vainly does this suffering heart now rue
Those days unchaperoned, those unshadowed nights!
Give me again, Great God, my liberty!
Give me my heaven once more, or let me die!

Paul Prince.

Unfair Controversy.

When the Greeks were imperfectly-reasoning savages, they carried on their arguments mainly by use of blows, or of offensive epithets, which possessed a power of stinging and irritating superior to that of physical blows. Thus Achilles, having a question of right or wrong to settle with Agamemnon, adopts this style: "Wine-bibber, having the countenance of a dog, but the heart of a stag, never hast thou at any time dared in soul to arm thyself with the people for war, nor to go to ambuscade with the chief of the Greeks; for this always appears to thee to be death. . . . . A people-devouring king art thou, since thou rulest over fellows of no account." To this his adversary replies (addressing the witnesses of the controversy): "This man is desirous to be above all other men; he wishes to have the mastery, and lord it over all, and to prescribe for all; with which his desires, I think, some one will not comply. If the ever-existing gods have made him a warrior, do they therefore give him the right to utter insults?"

But the question was not at all a question of the cowardice or the rudeness of either of the disputants. In their inability to reason upon the main point, the two savages resorted to calling names, and to charges against each other's character, simply because they did not know how to discover to each other the real right and wrong in the dispute between them.

I have never liked such method of controversy. It is too theological; too much in the fashion of those who shout "atheist, infidel, liar, blasphemer," etc., etc., because they have no confidence in the truth of their own cool arguments. It seems to me a very unfortunate thing that the editor of Liberty should needlessly resort to such savage style of refuting an opponent, in this day of improved quantity and quality of words. March 9, 1895, he asserts that "Mrs. Dietrick persists in falsely and inexcusably proclaiming in the 'Twentieth Century' that Liberty is opposed to the liberty of woman."

Now, if I had, really, "falsely and inexcusably" proclaimed that Liberty is opposed to the liberty of woman, why does not the editor quote the passages in the "Twentieth Century" where he finds such a proclamation? And then, if he can find such a proclamation (I cannot), why does he not explain what he means by the editorials of June 30 and August 25, 1894?

The editor of Liberty betrays that he, first, entirely misunderstands me, and, second, that, failing to understand me, he jumps to the conclusion that I resort to "dodging and worse" (that is, that I resort to "a low trick," "a shifty contrivance," or "an evasion," for that is what "dodging" means); that my protest against his putting words into my mouth which I never used is mere "logomachy," and that I have no right to say that "I do not 'persist' in the statement I did make," unless I mean to confess that I have changed my mind in regard to the statement!

Shakespeare says, in effect, that, though one should beware of entrance to a quarrel, yet, being in, one must bear arms bravely lest the opposer put an end to one. I started out, in the "Twentieth Century," with intention of calling Liberty's attention to the fact that its position is inconsistent, when it opposes women's possession of power to speak in regard to the laws now made by men for women's government. I believe that women's request for men's acknowledgment of their right to such power is a demand for more liberty than they now possess, and that it is, therefore, an evidence of progress.

The editor of Liberty has said: "My demand for liberty shall be made in the quarter where it seems (to me) most imperatively needed, *but no demand for liberty made elsewhere shall receive other than my encouragement. Nay, every such demand shall be hailed by me as an evidence of progress.*" I thereupon called upon the editor to hail woman's demand for liberty to speak in regard to her own government as an evidence of progress, and said that failure to do so, while championing the removal of restrictions on every other question, was evidence that Liberty "is prejudiced against women." Further evidence of such prejudice against women is found in Liberty's article of August 25, in which certain attributes of all ignorant people are ascribed as the peculiar attributes of woman as a sex.

As Liberty did not seem able to look at its position as I did, and as I was getting tired of its frequent flings at myself, I wished to drop the fruitless prolongation of the subject, and for that reason only I replied to Liberty's charge (that I "falsely and inexcusably," etc.), as one replies to a child whom one cannot convince, but hopes to silence, that I had entirely ceased the statements I did make. It was, therefore, perfectly true that I no longer "persisted" in saying anything at all on the subject. Liberty jumped to the conclusion that, when a person says, "I do not 'persist' in the statement I did make. On the contrary, I have entirely ceased it," that person says, in effect, "I have changed my mind"!!

When I deny that I intended to convey any such impression, Liberty practically charges me with being a liar! Because I cannot truthfully say that I meant what Liberty thinks I ought to have meant by the phrase above quoted, Liberty flies into a rage and pronounces my denial of Liberty's interpretation of my words to be "dodging and worse," "dishonest," "insincere," and so on!!!

Now, I might retort that in all the numerous controversies in which I have engaged I have never encountered an instance of perversity, obtuseness as to the shades of meaning in words, unreasonableness, bitterness, so obvious as this now revealed by Liberty's conduct. But what good would it do? I honestly think that Liberty is entirely in the wrong in this matter, from its June 30 (1894) editorial to its editorial of May 4, 1895. But I do Liberty the justice of believing in Liberty's desire to be honest in thinking that Liberty is entirely right. We simply see the case from a different point of view. It is absurd for Liberty to assume that I have "tried to deceive" any one into thinking anything. What motive could I possibly have for desiring to make the readers of Liberty believe that I had changed my mind? If I am guilty of any fault, it is of such weariness of the unprofitable attempt to convince Liberty of any error it had made that I ingloriously gave up the quarrel with the statement, "I do not 'persist.'" All I meant to convey was this, "I cease to contend with you on this point." It never remotely occurred to me that that could be misconstrued. If it had, I should have made a more guarded expression of my desire to stop the controversy. I saw that, if Liberty was so unreasonable as to see no reason on my side, further argument was fruitless. Of course, if Liberty does not believe me, that is Liberty's misfortune, not my fault. But it might be wise to reflect that people do not usually resort to "dodging, dishonesty, and insincerity" without they have something to gain by it, and unless they have a general character as liar and cheat.

I am fearless and truthful, and I have no expectation of favors, or of any sort of profit, from the readers of Liberty. The only acknowledgment I have to make in this matter is that in March I overlooked my December article, and that, therefore, my cessation of statement in regard to Liberty's arguments on the woman question was a cessation of only about *four* months, instead of about eight months, — a fact which, however, did not in the least affect the truth of my having ceased. There was an oversight in regard to the time when I ceased the statement I did make, but, whether it was four months or one month, I contend that I was not bound to say more than that I had ceased to make it, and that, therefore, Liberty was in error in publishing that I "persist" in saying it. My reason was that I was tired of the hopeless attempt to persuade Liberty that it was wrong, and wished Liberty to observe that I had entirely dropped the subject. When Liberty misconstrued that explanation of my position, and demanded that I should apologize, as a consistent conclusion to what it construed as confession of being in the wrong, I was forced to take up the cudgels again, in self-defence. The only result is that Liberty now adds personal insult to myself to Liberty's past inconsistency and injustice on the question at issue. Is it not, indeed, hopeless to try to argue with such a controversialist?

ELLEN BATTELLE DIETRICK.

Ibsen's Latest Utterance.

Is Henrik Ibsen a teacher? If so, what does he teach? These were the questions that presented themselves to me, despite all previously-formed judgments, as I closed the little volume containing the latest of his social plays, — "Little Eyolf."

In "Brand" we see the Christian ideal of self-sacrifice pursued unflinchingly to its legitimate culmination in sublime, yet tragic, failure. "What a satire on Altruism!" exclaims the Egoist.

In "Peer Gynt" the attempt at self-realization resolves itself into miserable inanity, — an end possessing none of the sublimity, but all of the tragedy, which had characterized the former poem. "What a tremendous commentary on selfishness!" cry the delighted Altruists.

"But you must read 'Ghosts,'" chimes in a worshipper of nature, "if you would know what fate awaits those who prostrate themselves in submission to the moral law."

"Read 'Rosmersholm,'" gravely answers the moralist, "and learn the fearful penalties that attend any infringement of that law."

The invincible protest of humanity against Christianity, which rings like a peal of martial music through every scene of "Emperor and Galilean," dies away in the despairing confession that "the Galilean has conquered."

Master-builder Solness scales the height to which his fair friend has incited him, but death comes to turn his victory into a ghastly jest.

It is not until we try to fathom the meaning of "Little Eyolf," however, that our perplexity reaches its climax. In few of Ibsen's plays does the spell of his strange genius exert itself more powerfully; in none are the characteristic features of the author reproduced more signally; yet in none is the *denouement* so at variance (if it is to be taken literally) with the entire spirit and letter of the master's earlier teachings.

The curtain rises upon a scene in which almost all the actors have become known to us.

Alfred Allmers is Rosmer, transplanted into new conditions.

Rita, his wife, is the type of woman in whose delineation the dramatist most excels; beautiful, impetuous, passionate, with an intellect wherein the grossest misconceptions alternate with electric flashes of most penetrating insight; with a heart, sometimes fierce, often tender, never tranquil.

In striking contrast with this rich, wild nature is that of Asta, the sister of Allmers.

Lovely and lovable always, she lives with but a single aim, — that of bringing happiness to others.

She is one of those who, like the English poet's ideal, "on tip-toe seem to touch upon a sphere too gross to tread." We venture to believe that, if society were entirely made up of these angelic beings, the drama and the novel would never have come into existence.

In the centre of this little group stands Eyolf, the crippled child of Alfred and Rita, the object of his father's affectionate solicitude and his mother's jealous hatred.

Rita is passing through the old, well-nigh inevitable tragedy of a woman's life, — that of seeing herself valued by her husband, no longer as the object of a romantic passion, no longer as an individual to be respected, but solely for the sake of her motherhood. She looks upon little Eyolf as having supplanted her in the heart where she would reign the undisputed queen.

After the boy's tragic death, however, the wife learns, to her horror, that her husband had at no time deeply and sincerely loved her. He had married her, in part, because she was entrancingly beautiful, but still more because of her gold and her green forests.

On the same day Allmers discovers that Asta is only his foster-sister, and perceives that the love which he

has pledged to the one woman he has given to the other. Asta, seeing his passion for her, and knowing it to be reciprocal, thinks instantly of the unhappy Rita. To save her friend, she gives her hand in marriage to one whose love she does not pretend to return, and leaves the man she loves alone with the being whose passionate devotion has become only a source of weariness and vexation. Alfred and Rita stand together, watching the steamer that bears her away from them; watching the death agony of life's dearest possibilities. The husband will fly for refuge to the solitudes of the mountains. The wife, bereaved of her love, will try to fill the void in her heart and life by devoting herself to the well-being of that fraction of bereaved humanity lying nearest to her, — the poor children of the village. When Alfred learns of this plan, he is struck with the sense of its nobleness, and begs that he may remain at her side and aid in its execution. The dream-land of love and happiness is behind them. Its gates of pearl must remain closed and locked forever. But measureless fields of human need lie before them, inviting endless labor. They are on the eve of a long day's work, followed, perchance, by a contented evening whose sunset glow shall fall from the loving and approving eyes of Asta and little Eyolf.

And so the curtain falls on three maimed lives, whose remnants are to be absorbed in the joyless service of mankind. Marriage, instead of a union sanctioned by the tie of mutual love, is a partnership for utilitarian purposes, philanthropic or otherwise.

Passion is an enemy to be feared, happiness an *ignis fatuus* never to be sought, and work our only refuge from despair.

Is this the final message from the author of "Ghosts" to the waiting world? Does he mean to tell us that all human endeavor ends inevitably in tragedy? Or is he, after all, simply an artist who reproduces phase after phase of life, with no deeper purpose than the faithful interpretation of nature? Should we read one of Ibsen's plays as we would look at a painting by Millet or listen to one of Wagner's operas, — as an end in itself, a master-piece of artistic power, rather than a vehicle of moral (or immoral) teaching?

I have long refused to entertain either of these conclusions. I am aware that, taken severally, the social dramas are capable of being interpreted as expressions of the most advanced social philosophy, but the veil of deep and constant gloom which enshrouds even his sublimest conceptions, the confutation of the doctrines embodied in any one of these dramas by the doctrines embodied in another, and, most of all, the deepening pessimism of "The Master Builder" and "Little Eyolf," — all these will lead the reader to question whether he has been right in regarding Ibsen as the high priest of Egoism.

MRS. HOWARD UDELL.

Ibsen's Real Teaching.

A proof of the foregoing article was submitted by the editor of Liberty to Mr. Herman Kuehn, and his comments on it appear below.

Ibsen may be termed the high priest of Realism, though Realism is all that priestliness is not. The tragedy element in his dramas is due to the persistency with which real characters in real life cling to Sentimentalism. Tak Kak once said: "All life is a struggle, and every phase of it a battle." The struggle is against the domination of superstition, and the battles are engagements with the conventionalities growing out of our adherence to the prejudices we inherit from our unenlightened ancestors.

As to "Little Eyolf," monopolistic monogamy is the hobgoblin which mocks Rita's love for her mate and embitters her life. Jealousy of her son is an incident of the masterfulness of the demon of monopoly. If constancy, steadfastness, fidelity are virtues, then monopoly is not the effective method of fostering them. Given two people who could, under *any* circumstances, maintain an enduring marital relation, the chances for their carrying out the conditions are weakened by the bondage of the monopoly element; they would be strengthened by Freedom.

"Passion is an enemy to be feared, happiness an *ignis fatuus* never to be sought, and work our only refuge from despair," is Mrs. Udell's summary. Ibsen gives no warrant for it. Passion is not to be feared, except when swayed by a sentimentalism based on outworn fallacies. It is the basic fallacy that is to be feared. Happiness is no delusion, but a real possibility, within the grasp of those alone who abjure spectres. Work is indeed our refuge from despair, but more largely in the sense that our comfort depends on the productiveness of our work, and without physical comfort there is no possibility of happiness.

In "Little Eyolf" we find nothing inconsistent with Egoism. Rita finds herself balked of her monopoly, and flies to a fad for comfort; but it is her own comfort she seeks rather than that of the village ragamuffins. Allmers would fly to the solitude of the mountains, because he does not see the way to be comfortable elsehow; but he suddenly changes from that resolve, when it appears to him possible to have greater comfort by remaining with Rita and participating in her fad. While he mourns for Little Eyolf, he catches himself wondering what there is to be for dinner. Who knows but that (unconsciously to himself perhaps) he may not have allowed the gastronomic disparity between the mountain larder and the home possibilities to sway him somewhat? Then, too, there are the green forests and the yellow gold.

Ibsen shows us that Rita and Allmers were shipwrecked mariners who had trusted to the compass of Sentimentalism, — a slipshod makeshift for a real compass, — and they were cast ashore on the rocks of Altruria. Their hearts were not broken by the impact, and so they went to work to civilize the savages of Altruria, — not because they loved the Altrurians, but because it seemed to them all that they could do to secure their own comfort. Naturally they wanted to benefit the Altrurian children; but that desire arises from the fact that it makes us more comfortable to feel that the work we do to secure comfort is productive rather than futile.

Nothing that Ibsen has written is inconsistent with Egoism, — with the principle that the general happiness is to be had only by the way of each individual seeking his own happiness, rather than by attempting the work at wholesale by prearrangement or conventions.

Ibsen is a teacher. He teaches Realism. The tragedies he exhibits to us result from the sovereignty of Sentimentalism. In his "Wild Duck" he shows us that we cannot pay "the claims of the Ideal" without doing so from the possibility of our happiness, and this thought underlies all of Ibsen's work. Rita did not find in Allmers the ideal husband she had pictured. Ideal husbands do not exist in real life. Nor ideal wives, for that matter. The real husband and the real wife are less picturesque, but they "wear" better.

HERMAN KUEHN.

Labor and Competition.

To the Editor of Liberty:

You say we should not denounce the "Arena" because of its competitive practices in the field of labor unless we deny that principle and espouse State Socialism, — *i. e.*, we must not practise restriction in one instance unless we practise it in all, and the governing circumstances are not to be taken into consideration. As well might you say the libertarian should not use the post-office, unless he deny liberty and become an authoritarian. You ask labor to submit to competition in wages while it is denied choice of employment, or else avow monopoly. With two of the principal factors in production — land and capital — illegitimately protected, you ask the third, labor, to acquiesce in the legitimate. You ask too much. Before labor is asked to surrender its present position, restriction of natural resources must first be removed. Our position is one of expediency, — a vital part of any principle, — and to surrender now would be to sacrifice the principle itself. (You remember your experience with the tax-collector of Revere.) Labor is on the defensive, and will take advantage of any weapon — even the State — to repel the invader. Possibly a bad choice of weapons, but the selection is limited, and the denied are not choosers.

In the field of industrialism, as at present instituted, passive resistance, *via* the educational process, might beget martyrs and evolve statues of liberty and themes for the poet's muse, but it would not fill that aching void which asks for appeasement in the present. I rather think it would be a case of "dipping buckets into empty wells and growing old in drawing nothing up." The evil is *here;* the trade-union deals with it *now*. Can you name any class institution, social, religious, educational, or charitable, that does as much? Not only this; the trade union, while practising its art, is an educational force; by reducing hours of labor and increasing wages, it enlarges the field of the teacher, — builds "a wagon-way through the air" along which you reformers may safely travel. And it inculcates a spirit of independence and a healthy contempt for the shams of the day.

Libertarians are too prone to believe the trade union, because of its occasional legislative leanings, a wholesale repressionist, and hence we find their sympathies misplaced; but the Denver convention does not say so, nor does the generally expressed opinion, which denounces the State through its courts and judges as but a tool of special privilege and back-stairs influences. Unable to abolish a law, the trade unions may advocate a second to offset the evil effects of a first, but that does not make of them believers in the principle of dictatorship. The recent Maguire act, abolishing coercion of seamen, clipping the wings of the "crimp," — and who will say it is not well? — secured by the American Federation of Labor, will depend for its operation upon the watchful eye of the sailors' union, and no one knows it better than the officers of that organization. Nor can it be said the example is bad, for the members know full well it was not the State, but their organization — themselves — that secured relief. We need to abolish more of such restrictions before criticisms will be in order upon the restrictions of trade unions, which are at the present time, in some degree, holding the government and monopoly in check.

The action of the "Arena" may be in harmony with the principle of free competition, but labor decidedly objects to be the sole subject to which that principle is applied. It is not free competition, but a one-sided affair. We cannot have competition until all the factors are free. State Socialists may say we have, but I did not expect to find such an implication in Liberty.

You say: "The printers are struggling for self-preservation; on the other hand, the 'Arena' is doing the same." What is life to the printers, then, is death to the "Arena," or *vice versa*. How will the verdict be reached? Must a bad article (which you style the "Arena") be supported at the expense of a good one? Failing to possess exchange value, must labor be robbed to support it? The fact is, the "Arena" demands more than it produces.

AUG. MCCRAITH.

To Parents.

You who are parents desire the safety of your children. It is your earnest wish that your child will never meet such a fate as that of little eight-year-old Alice Sterling, who not long ago was outraged and foully murdered in Boston. If there is anything that you can do to prevent such crimes, you will not neglect to take the necessary precautions to insure the safety of your child as well as the children of your neighbors and your own grandchildren and great-grandchildren to come.

There is something that you can do that will be more efficacious in prevention than heavy penalties or fine detective work. A proper inquiry into the causes of these crimes will furnish a clue to the means that should be employed in prevention. In the Sterling case there were two crimes, — seduction and murder (or perhaps rape and murder). Desire may be said to be the cause of the seduction, but sexual desire can not at all be said to be the direct cause of the murder. The murder was directly caused by fear of the penalties to follow detection, fear of the law's twenty years in the State prison, fear of Judge Lynch's threat to tear the "brute's" body to pieces. The seducer felt safer in adding murder to outrage than in allowing his victim to live to tell her story. Outrage is bad enough, but it is better that fifty thousand little girls should be outraged than that one should be murdered. You would feel badly to know that your daughter had been outraged, but, as half the human race legally marry their female children at that early age, you could bear the outrage better than the murder. Many cases of murder added to outrage come to light every year; a far greater number of simple outrage become known to the public; and doubtless thousands of cases

of outrage never come to light at all. The problem is whether something cannot be done that will cause the murders practically to cease, while not too greatly increasing the outrages. The seducer must be made to feel safer in allowing his victim to live to testify against him than in murdering her. You, parents, for the safety of your own children, must create a public sentiment against lynchings for seduction. Also, you must aim to create a state of public opinion that will decrease the penalty for seduction from twenty years to a period of time somewhat nearly commensurate with the crime. Rape must be more severely punished, but seduction must not be called rape at any age.

In this way many lives will be saved. Possibly the number of seductions would be slightly increased, but what is that to the saving of human life ?

Mothers are the true movers in this reform, as men do not dare to have too much to say on such a subject. If mothers love their children wisely, they will not shrink from entering upon this work of education.

EDGAR D. BRINKERHOFF.

MORRISVILLE, PA., APRIL 20, 1895.

Anarchist Letter-Writing Corps.

The Secretary wants every reader of Liberty to send in his name for enrolment. Those who do so thereby pledge themselves to write, when possible, a letter every fortnight, on Anarchism or kindred subjects, to the "target" assigned in Liberty for that fortnight, and to notify the secretary promptly in case of any failure to write to a target (which it is hoped will not often occur), or in case of temporary or permanent withdrawal from the work of the Corps. All, whether members or not, are asked to lose no opportunity of informing the secretary of suitable targets. Address, STEPHEN T. BYINGTON, 108 W. 13th St., New York City.

I am informed that the "Corner Stone," a target in the last issue of Liberty, is no longer published. But without doubt its editor is still writing somewhere, and, if our letters have put any new ideas in her head, they will not have been in vain.

Cohen sends an account of what he calls "the result of one day's harvesting." Two letters in one paper; two in another, with editorial notes in our favor; five in another; one in another, in which Comrade Labadie is also carrying on a discussion. His comment is: "Good crop, isn't it ?"

He adds, "Don't put me in any more as a target, but tell the members of the Corps, if any of them are willing to do some extra work besides their regular targets, to communicate with me." His address, as most of us know by this time, is 1239 Welton St., Denver, Col.

A member of the Corps writes: "I think every letter, almost, ought to give (say in postscript) Tucker's address, and recommend one or more of his publications. The editor might cut off postscript if he chose; in fact, the writer might say the postscript is for the editor personally, but, if he be interested in the dissemination of literature devoted to the social problem, the P. S. might be published." Good advice — the former part for all, the latter part for those whom it suits.

Target, Section A. — "Meriden Populist," P. O. Box 939, Meriden, Conn. In comment on a Decoration Day address by Rev. Frank Dixon at Hartford, in which he argued that there was no way out of industrial slavery, saying,

> While there are men in a nation who can not secure and retain possession of the means of production, there will be slavery. . . . . There are certain types of men whom nature means to exterminate. Her purpose is beneficent. No man, no law, can prevent the execution of it. These types constitute the slaves of humanity. They perpetuate themselves, yet they are doomed by the immutable law of the survival of the fittest to constant destruction. All that philanthropy can do for them is to lessen the pain of their dissolution. What if the State possessed the means of production ? They would be none the less slaves. Their master would then become the State, and its demands of them would be exacting, merciless. There would be absolutely no appeal against its anthority. The process of extermination would be much more rapid and effective,

the paper said:

> This, to the man who finds himself in possession of a more developed organ of hopefulness than that vouchsafed Mr. Dixon, is a very strange argument. "While there are men in the nation who can not secure and retain possession of the means of production, there will be slavery." Surely. But what does that imply, if it be not the thought that where men *can* secure and retain possession of the means of production there will *not* be slavery ? Therefore, why should there be this slavery, then, when the State or society takes possession of the means of production — doesn't the "State" or "society" mean all the people — all the people in possession thereof ? Mr. Dixon seems to hold the State as a separate organism, — a sort of a being made up of the concentrated selfishness and tyranny of the individuals of such nature in the community, apart from the community itself. Socialism does not regard it as such. Nor does it look for the iron rule of merciless dèspotism as pictured by Mr. Dixon from the State's administration of affairs replacing that of Individualism. Why ? Because the incentive of one man to profit by wronging another is no longer present. The letter-carrier in the post-office explains the situation. Where is there an official, from the postmaster general down, who is to derive any direct benefit or advantage to himself in the reduction of wages or increasing the toil of any employee under his supervision within the whole department ? Not one.

Show that the fact of my having a vote doesn't make it true that "the State or society" is run for my benefit. A good argument might be made by showing how the post-office robs the people.

Section B. — Alcander Longley, 2 N. 4th St., St. Louis, Mo., editor of "The Altruist," a Communist (not Anarchist-Communist) paper, organ of a community in St. Louis. In the February number a letter from J. G. Truman, saying,

> I see that you are working on essentially the same plan you had twenty years ago, when I was with you, while I have given up Communism, pure and simple. A flock of sheep or geese can agree and all go together, but intelligent people do not like to be led, either by one man or a large majority; they prefer to do as they please, even if it proves to be wrong. I believe the true form of society to be that which will give the greatest amount of liberty to the individual. When everything has to be submitted to vote and all are dependent on others, we are too much like slaves. I want coöperation, in which each is free to do as he pleases so long as he does not interfere with the freedom of others, and is willing to contribute his share toward the general expenses,

is thus answered:

> Sorry to see that he still thinks the individual more important than society, and can't understand that there is the greatest safety in a multitude of counsel. The greatest good to the greatest number can only be secured by the decision of the greatest number, and the greatest good of all is the greatest good of each. Egoism sets all against each other, but Altruism unites all for the greatest good of each. When two or more differ, the greatest number should decide, for, as each one expresses his own wishes, the greatest freedom and satisfaction will thus be secured to the greatest number. If each one is to decide for himself as to whether his actions interfere with the rights of others, he may often differ with others in that respect; and, when persons differ in their opinions, there must be some way of compromising or agreeing, in order to avoid the antagonism which would be the inevitable result. If no mutual arrangement was made to arbitrate their differences, then the strongest or shrewdest would have his way by force, and this would result in a continual strife between every individual who differed with another. But by agreeing to arbitrate all such differences by the majority vote of those concerned, the rights of the greater number are secured, and a less number are required to submit to others in this way than in any other. How strange it is that people who have been born and raised in this country cannot understand the fundamental principles upon which our government is founded. Anarchy is worse than monarchy. We will venture to say that every Anarchist is afflicted with an extra large bump of self-esteem, which infirmity should, of course, make him excusable for thinking more of himself than of others. It would be much better if people would be as peaceable and sociable as a flock of geese or sheep, instead of living separately and fighting and killing each other, like carnivorous fowls and animals do.

Every single sentence of this contains a complete fallacy, either in statement or implication, clearly enough brought out to make the answer easy. Answer whichever you can answer best.

STEPHEN T. BYINGTON.

The King Can Do No Right.

[Detroit Tribune.]

The rules of morality are absolutely suspended when consideration of society's acts is had, since society is not capable of being immoral. The essence of wrong conduct is the interference with the liberty of the individual. Society is federated for the express purpose of interfering with the liberty of the individual. It cannot be hampered at all with the general considerations of right and wrong. If society has the right to tax, it has the right to kill.

[The context shows that this is not meant for irony. Comment would spoil it.]

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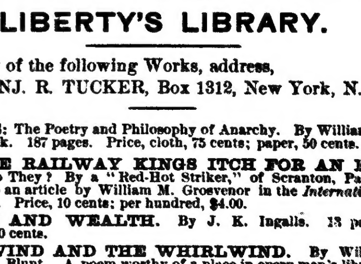
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